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**Lt. Governor Diane Denish, Attorney General Patricia Madrid, NMED, DOE
and LANL Execute Historic Clean up Order**

(Santa Fe, NM) – Lieutenant Governor Diane Denish and Attorney General Patricia Madrid today joined the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED), U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), and Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in the formal signing of a legally enforceable fence-to-fence clean up order. This agreement requires comprehensive investigation and clean up of environmental contamination at LANL. The order also sets a schedule for environmental clean up work, which must be completed by 2015.

“This agreement will help protect New Mexicans for generations to come,” said Lt. Governor Denish. “The state and LANL standing together here today is proof that tough but fair environmental regulation can pay dividends.”

The Order on Consent is between NMED, DOE and the Regents of the University of California.

“Execution of this enforceable order is a major accomplishment for NMED and all the people of New Mexico,” said NMED Secretary Curry. “After many years of tough negotiations, this legal order puts New Mexicans in control of LANL clean up and gives us the power to make sure this important work is completed.”

The Order on Consent requires comprehensive investigation and clean up of environmental contamination at LANL, including remediation of material disposal areas, ground water and other areas of contamination.

“This order represents a clear path forward for a measured clean up of laboratory sites and helps meet our ongoing commitment to protecting the safety of our people and the surrounding environment,” said LANL Director Pete Nanos. “We appreciate the relationship of trust this agreement represents between the state and our laboratory.”

In addition to this order, DOE and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently formalized a Federal Facility Compliance Agreement (FFCA). This agreement will ensure that all surface water monitoring plans required by the order are completed.

“The Department appreciates the commitment of NMED in establishing a firm regulatory role for the State,” said Ed Wilmot, Manager of the Los Alamos Site Office. “Both the Laboratory and Federal management have been significantly changed during the last year to improve our performance in becoming environmental stewards.”

Governor Bill Richardson, Senator Pete Domenici, NMED and DOE announced general agreement on this clean up order last March. Since then, the technical and legal staffs of the parties have been at work hammering out the details of the document signed today.

“My office has worked closely with NMED to fashion a corrective order for environmental clean up at LANL,” said Attorney General Madrid. “Most importantly, I wanted to ensure that under this agreement the state is still free to pursue any remedies for natural resource damages that may have occurred.”

The proposed Consent Order is the result of nearly two years of negotiations between NMED, DOE, the Regents of the University of California, and the United States Department of Justice. Its clean up requirements are based on information that past handling, storage, treatment and disposal of hazardous wastes at LANL have caused hazardous waste and hazardous constituents to be released into the environment.

From 1943 to the present, operations at LANL have generated, treated, stored, and disposed of solid wastes, hazardous wastes, and hazardous wastes mixed with radioactive wastes. Solid, hazardous, and radioactive wastes were disposed of in numerous septic systems, surface impoundments, pits, trenches, shafts, landfills, waste piles and other sites located throughout LANL. The types of hazardous and solid wastes that have been handled and disposed of include chlorinated and non-chlorinated solvents, high explosives, metals, polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), nitrates, and radionuclides. In several locations, contamination of the regional aquifer (from which Los Alamos County draws drinking water) has occurred. Currently at LANL, more than 1,900 sites require corrective action.

A copy of the Order on Consent is available at the NMED website:
<http://www.nmenv.state.nm.us/HWB/lanlperm.html>.

Los Alamos National Laboratory is operated by the University of California for the National Nuclear Security Administration of the Department of Energy. LANL comprises 49 current and former Technical Areas covering approximately 40 square miles.

For additional information, please contact Jon Goldstein, NMED Communications Director, at (505) 827-0314.

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